Recommendations and Commendations
Depository Library Council Meeting
Fall 2002, Arlington, VA

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **PURL Statistics**

The Depository Library Council recommends the Government Printing Office develop statistical reports of PURL referrals to enable libraries to determine how often documents within the Federal Depository Library Program Electronic Collection are being accessed through library catalogs and Web pages. In addition, the Government Printing Office should examine the response time of the PURL server to ensure access to resources within a reasonable time frame.

Rationale: Currently the Government Printing Office provides URL referral statistics for depository libraries. In addition, PURL statistical reports will allow librarians to monitor the effectiveness of the access provided to online government publications through depository library catalogs and Web pages.

2. **WAIS Migration**

The Depository Library Council recommends the Government Printing Office migrate the WAIS databases to more current search engine technology as soon as possible.

Rationale: The Government Printing Office has been exploring the purchase of new search engine technology for several years. Due to the severe limitations of WAIS technology, it is imperative that GPO Access migrate to a new XML-based technology. Advantages inherent in newer database architectures will also improve products through more advanced interfaces with the Integrated Library System being acquired by the Government Printing Office.

3. **Regional Library Conference**

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Government Printing Office request funding to sponsor a multi-day Regional Library Conference.

Rationale: The August 1997 Regionals Conference in Minnesota was extremely successful in providing all 53 regional depositories and all states the opportunity to discuss and assess the services, responsibilities, and problems that are unique to Regionals, as well as identify areas for service to selective depositories. The meeting would allow an opportunity for the Government Printing Office staff to consult with the Regionals, train them in Government Printing Office policies and procedures and discuss services that Regionals should provide to selective depositories.

4. **Communication with Administrators**

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Government Printing Office communicate the importance and benefits of the Federal Depository Library Program to key groups of library administrators, preferably at their association meetings (e.g., Association of Research Libraries, Public Library Association, American Library Association, Association of College and Research Libraries, and state library associations, etc.).

*Rationale***:** The Depository Library Council recognizes the need for communication from the Government Printing Office to directors at depository libraries in order to reinforce the importance of the program, to inform directors of current issues facing depositories, and to form a basis of discussion between depository librarians and their administrators. The proposed communications would assist in building awareness and support at higher levels and would hopefully interest library directors in joining the program. A special presentation on the Federal Depository Library Program held at the American Library Association Midwinter Meeting in 1995 was very successful and attracted 150 attendees. A similar successful meeting, sponsored by the regional library, was held on the state level in Georgia in 2001.

5. **Guidelines for Regionals**

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Government Printing Office review and develop expanded guidelines to assist regional depositories in working with depository libraries that may be considering withdrawing from the Federal Depository Library Program. Guidelines for the Regional might include:

- Instructions requiring the withdrawing library to notify its Regional and the Government Printing Office of its intent to withdraw six to twelve months before the intended date of withdrawal;

- Notification to the withdrawing library of the procedures it must follow with respect to:
    - What the library can retain versus what it must or will surrender;
    - What the library must provide for public access during the withdrawal process;

- Announcement to other libraries within that Congressional district of its intent to withdraw;

- Communication by the Regional with the withdrawing library's Congressional delegation;
    - Informing the delegation of the library's intent to withdraw;
    - Informing the delegation of their ability to appoint a library to fill that vacancy;

- Establishment of a time frame that the library must follow in the disposition of the withdrawing library's materials.

Rationale: Currently the communication process between the Regional and the withdrawing library remains unclear. Better communication involving all parties may encourage the library to reconsider its decision. Refining the process will also enhance the redistribution of depository materials to other interested Federal depository libraries.

6. **Historic Document Preservation**

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Government Printing Office, in cooperation with other library preservation organizations, begin to identify historic documents and investigate means for depository libraries to preserve them.

Rationale: Many depositories housing historical collections are witnessing a rapid deterioration of these valuable collections. Council shares the depository community's concerns and urges work with such organizations to develop and implement guidelines that will assist libraries in preserving and archiving these collections.

7. **GPO-Hosted Web Sites**

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Government Printing Office provide guidance to Federal government agencies on the organization of content on GPO-hosted Web sites. Examples of such guidance may include the GPO Access Web design guidelines, Web site templates, or examples of best practices at existing government Web sites.

Rationale: A careful analysis of the organization of GPO-hosted Web sites shows that many agencies fail to provide direct access to discrete government information titles. The lack of clear and consistent organization may make it difficult for the public to locate desired information at these Web sites, and it is difficult to provide bibliographic access or create PURLs for multipart titles. The Government Printing Office typically provides guidance to government agencies on the layout and organization of printed publications. Providing guidance for the organization of Web site content is a natural extension of this activity in the electronic environment.

8. **Benefits of Being a Depository**

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Government Printing Office distribute to the depository community the following items provided by Council:

- "List of Benefits of Being a Federal Depository Library"
- "Testimonials from Depository Librarians"
- "Suggested Responses to Frequently Cited Reasons for Leaving the Depository Library System"

Council also recommends that the Government Printing Office begin integrating this information into the Depository Library Program documentation.

Rationale: Recognizing the increasing number of departures from the Federal Depository Library Program, the Government Printing Office requested assistance with compiling a list of benefits of remaining a depository library.

9. **FDLP-L**

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Government Printing Office require each depository to subscribe to the FDLP-L email announcement list, which was developed to convey official Federal Depository Library Program announcements.

10. **Anniversary Packets**

The Depository Library Council recommends that the Government Printing Office develop a packet of materials suitable for use by libraries celebrating anniversaries of their designations as depositories. This packet may include a certificate by the Government Printing Office recognizing the library's longevity within the program and contributions thereto. The packet may also include a letter from the Government Printing Office to the library director expressing appreciation for the library's past work, examples of newspaper articles that mention not only the library's anniversary but also the importance of the Federal Depository Library Program, a list of suggested celebratory activities, and sample texts of press releases and radio spots.

Rationale: Several Federal depository libraries will be celebrating centennial and other significant anniversaries in the next several years. Currently there is no such packet of materials and this would be an invaluable resource for libraries wishing to raise the level of awareness of the role of the Federal Depository Library Program in their local communities.

COMMENDATIONS

A. Council commends the Government Printing Office for the creation of the Web-based "Clickable Map of Federal Depository Libraries," which provides all citizens with easy identification and location of Federal depository libraries.

B. Council commends the Government Printing Office for designing and making available a selection of electronic depository logos containing statutory language on access that depositories can use on their Web pages, in presentations, and in promotional materials.

C. Council commends the Government Printing Office for creating the FDLP-L email list to provide timely and official notification on matters of importance and interest to depositories. This email announcement list is valuable as a direct and easy-to-monitor conduit of communication from the Government Printing Office to the depository community.

D. Council commends the Government Printing Office for creating the GPO-ELSALE-L email list to notify interested depositories of titles that remain available in tangible format from the sales program although they have been converted to online-only distribution through the depository program.

E. Council commends the Government Printing Office for responding to the problem of incomplete text files in GPO Access through the addition of disclaimer notices to the text files and by emphasizing the availability of complete PDF versions to users. The text versions of many files on GPO Access lack TIFF images, which appear in the PDF

versions. A process is underway to flag those text files that contain notices of missing content.

F. Council commends the Government Printing Office for responding to the need to break large PDF files into smaller and logically usable sub-files and for its efforts to develop procedures for evaluating existing GPO Access files and incoming files for usability. Some files provided to the Government Printing Office are extremely large, making downloading difficult or impossible for many users. Breaking large files into discrete parts, especially along logical division points (e.g., chapters), enhances the public's ability to access electronic files.

G. Council commends the Government Printing Office for including in the spring and fall meetings of the Depository Library Council time for a separate meeting of the regional libraries. This meeting provides a forum for sharing ideas and discussing common concerns. Council encourages the Government Printing Office to continue to provide the opportunity for an all-day session at the fall meeting and a half-day session at the spring meeting.

H. Council commends the Government Printing Office for the creation and implementation of an online claiming system to replace the paper method.

I. Council commends the Indiana University Libraries and the CIC (Committee on Institutional Cooperation) Government Documents Group for their partnership with the Government Printing Office on the innovative Floppy Disk Project, which preserves access to information originally distributed to Federal depositories on now outdated floppy disk media.

J. Council commends the Government Printing Office for its successful recruitment of professional catalogers and supervisors during the past year. Because of these efforts, staffing levels of the Government Printing Office Cataloging Branch are now at an all-time high. Having a full complement of cataloging staff will enhance the Government Printing Office's ability to identify and provide access to Federal government information.

K. Council commends the Government Printing Office for developing a mechanism for providing Continuing Education Units and certificates for Government Printing Office sponsored education and training activities.